

the political organization Fanmi Lavalas

Port-au-Prince, March 18, 2004 -(AHP)- The Republic's Senate president, Yvon Feuillé, condemned Thursday a scheme from the former opposition aimed at destroying the political organization Fanmi Lavalas.

Mr. Feuillé says the persecutions of the party's activists and leaders throughout the country prove that there is a scheme.

He said his party is the most represented in the country. He regretted that the former opposition was taking advantage of the absence of President Aristide to start persecuting the party's supporters in order to keep them from regrouping.

He asked the Latortue government to guarantee multipartism in Haiti.

Senator Yvon Feuillé was also happy to see that the armed supporters of Lavalas were starting to hand over their weapons to facilitate the disarmament process. He asked the armed supporters of the opposition to do the same to help pacifying the country.

Concerning the relentless efforts from some sectors to try and destroy the Republic's Senate, the president of that institution asked these sectors to stop their fall into unconstitutionality.

The Senate, he said, is a constitutional institution. He also announced that this institution's activities would resume. The Senate is currently made of 15 members out of 27.

A plenary session will be held Wednesday at the Parliament, where many issues will be discussed, Mr. Feuillé said, adding that he was talking with other parliamentary associations throughout the world.

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Many ministers of the Latortue government officially sworn at their position

Port-au-Prince, March 18, 2004 -(AHP)- Many ministers of the Latortue government were officially sworn at their position this Thursday.

In his formal speech, the new minister of Justice, Bernard Gousse, announced serious reforms in the judicial system.

"These reforms have to start in the faculties of law and the country's judicial school in order to have a real impact.

"We must start now institutionalizing judicial independence without compromising", Gousse

said.

The minister of Justice, who is counting on the national police's collaboration, said justice has to be available for all, without distinction.

The new minister of Finance, Henry Bazin, said he was determined to make things move in the right direction. He promised to manage with rigour the State's finances, as they face enormous challenges. He said he will face the country's tough reality with serenity and realism.

On his part, the minister of planning and external cooperation, Roland Pierre, promised to work towards quickly restoring cooperation with international lenders so the country can start moving forward again.

"There is a lot of work to do", Mr. Pierre said, as he hopes the whole government team feels the importance of its responsibilities.

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Senate President denies Fanmi lavalas involvement in the Latortue government and criticizes officials from the former opposition

Port-au-Prince, March 18, 2004 -(AHP)- The Republic's Senate President, Yvon Feuillé, denied Thursday any Fanmi Lavalas involvement in the Boniface/Latortue government, as suggested by some statements from leaders of the former opposition.

Yvon Feuillé, a member of Fanmi Lavalas coordination, said no member of this government is a part of his political organization.

Mr. Feuillé said that the delegation which met with Prime Minister Gérard Latortue told him it would be very difficult for Fanmi Lavalas to send representatives in his government, since supporters of the former opposition are persecuting the party's activists and leaders everywhere.

Senator Yvon Feuillé also criticized the leaders of the convergence who claim they were left out of the new government.

The vast majority of ministers from this government are either members of the opposition or have close ties to it, Mr. Feuillé stated.

The political platform of the opposition thinks it can fool the population. It is greatly represented in the government, but refuses to acknowledge it in order to avoid taking the blame for the failure looming, Senator Feuillé said.